

1. (Currently Amended) A mounting system for mounting an object to the railing of a deck, said mounting system comprising:

a base structure having a top side and a bottom side;

two opposing elements, that include a first element and a second element,

~~extending from said bottom side of said base structure, wherein each of said opposing elements define a said first element embodies bends that form a first plurality of stepped surfaces that are vertically offset and are at different distances from said bottom surface, and wherein said second element has a second plurality of stepped surfaces at distances from said bottom surface equal to said first plurality of stepped surfaces, wherein said first plurality of stepped surfaces and said second plurality of stepped surfaces extend in opposition toward each other across a gap that are generally parallel to said bottom side of said base structure at different distances from said base structure; and~~

~~an adjustment mechanism for selectively adjusting said gap between said first plurality of stepped surfaces and said second plurality of stepped surfaces a distance between said opposing elements.~~

2. (Original) The system according to Claim 1, further including a support pole that extends from said top surface of said base structure.

3. (Original) The system according to Claim 1, wherein said base structure defines a track.

4. (Original) The system according to Claim 3, wherein at least one of said opposing

elements engages said track and is slidably adjustable within said track.

5. (Original) The system according to Claim 3, wherein both of said opposing elements engage said track and are slidably adjustable in position within said track.

6. (Original) The system according to Claim 4, further including bolts for selectively locking said at least one of said opposing elements into said track at a fixed position.

7. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim 1, wherein each of said ~~opposing elements~~ first element defines a an initial stepped surface approximately three quarters of an inch below said bottom surface of said base structure.

8. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim 7, wherein each of said ~~opposing elements~~ first element defines a second stepped surface approximately one inch below said bottom surface of said base structure.

9. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim 8, wherein each of said ~~opposing elements~~ first element defines a third stepped surface approximately one and a half inches below said bottom surface of said base structure.

10. (Currently Amended) A mounting device for engaging a wooden rail, said device comprising:

a flat structure;  
two opposing elements that extend from said flat structure, wherein each of said opposing elements define a plurality of opposing sets of stepped surfaces that are vertically offset and extend toward each other, wherein each of said opposing sets of stepped surfaces are generally parallel to said flat structure ~~but ,and~~ are at different distances from said flat structure.

11. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 10, wherein said opposing elements are positionally adjustable ~~to create a selected distance between said opposing elements relative said flat structure.~~

12. (Original) The device according to Claim 10, wherein a track is disposed on said flat structure and at least one of said opposing elements is selectively positionable along said track.

13. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a first set of stepped surface surfaces approximately three quarters of an inch below said flat structure.

14. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a second set of stepped surface surfaces approximately one inch below said flat structure.

15. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a third set of stepped surface surfaces approximately one and a half inches below said flat structure.

16. (Original) The device according to Claim 10, further including a support pole extending at a perpendicular from said flat structure.

17. (Currently Amended) A universal mounting device for mounting to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch plank, a one inch plank or a one and a half inch plank, said device comprising:

a flat structure;

two opposing elements that extend from said flat structure, each of said opposing elements defining a plurality of opposing sets of stepped surfaces that are vertically offset and are generally parallel to said flat structure, wherein a first an initial set of stepped surface surfaces is approximately three quarters of an inch below said flat structure, a second set of stepped surface surfaces is approximately one inch below said flat surface and a third set of stepped surface surfaces is approximately one and a half inches below said flat surface.

18. (Original) The device according to Claim 17 wherein said opposing elements are a predetermined distance apart and said predetermined distance is selectively adjustable.

19. (Original)      The device according to Claim 17, further including a pole  
extending from said flat structure.